

The Bellman and the Captain.



AN arch and sturdy Bellman of the Town,
That us'd to cry his Matters up and down,
As Custom had not introduc'd the Thing,
Never concluded with—*God save the King*;
The loyal Tag, in some Parts of the Nation,
Both to the King's, and Bellman's Proclamation,
A blust'ring Captain, quarter'd in the Place
By where the Bellman daily trod his Pace,
Took it as his Commission to correct
Of Civil Rules so crying a Neglect.
One Day as honest Stentor passing by
Had finish'd of his Catalogue the Cry,
Hark ye, says he, you! Bellman! come up Stairs!—
A Dog!—I'll teach him how to cry his Wares.
Up goes the Man into a publick Room,
Where was the Captain strutting in a Fume,
And thought, that some Defect or another
Had put the Hero into such a Pother.
Sir, says he, bowing, and with Hat in Hand,
May't please your Worship, what is your Command?

Command? ye Dog! If I were to preside,
I'd break the Bones in your rebellious Hide!
Bones, Sir! break Bones! (and then put on his Hat)
What have I done, Sir? What d'ye mean by that?
I'm but a Bellman, but for all your Buff,
As good as you Sir, and can look as Bluff.
The Captain, not expecting such Rebuke,
Began to soften his enraged Look,
Smooth'd on his Brow the Military Frown,
And dropp'd his Wrath to gender Reas'ning down.
Pray, when you ring your Bell about here, Friend,
And cry your Stuff, why don't you at the End,
Pray for his Majesty King G——? I pray!
Reply'd the Bellman—O good lack-a-day!
I pray? forsooth! and why not preach as well?
Is it to Pray's you think I ring my Bell?
Tho' I could pray as well as you can swear,
'Tis not my Office, Master; howsome'er,
I thought you wanted to have something cry'd—
Well, but my — and, the Red-coat Spark reply'd,

In other Places, when the Bell is rung,
King G——is pray'd for; here, you hold your Tongue.
Look ye, I have listen'd, as you walk'd about,
And constantly have heard you leave it out;
I eat his Bread—and do insist that you
Pray for his Majesty as others do,
Or else I'll—Master, don't be in a Splutter,
You may eat Bread—and never forsake Butter,
What's that to me? and if you are, good Sir,
So fond of praying, as you make a Stir,
Which I much question, yet if that's the Case,
The Church, Sir, not the Market, is the Place;
If this be all you have to say—Farewell!
And so—the Bellman bore away the Bell.
When he was gone—but must a second Part
To the same Tune be sung?—with all my Heart—
When he was gone, the Captain quite abash'd
To find his Bill against the Bellman quash'd,
To blunt in Conversation, by Degrees,
The Edge of Stentor's cutting Repartees,

Pray, says he, speaking to a Stander-by,
Is it not usual, at the Bellman's Cry,
To pray, *God save the King*?—No, Sir, not here,
It is a Custom which they have elsewhere;
But to these Parts it has not yet come down,
At least I never heard it in this Town—
—You have in others—Ay, Sir, sev'ral Times,
It is a Thing as common as the Chimes:
Once, in particular, it made me smile—
—How so!—I'll tell ye, but, in the mean while,
A Story, Sir, without Offence begun,
Must have none taken, otherwise I've done—
Well, Sir, go on—Why once, in such a Place,
There liv'd a Bellman us'd to say this Grace,
Which ours knew nothing of, it should appear,—
—An ignorant Rascal!—Nay, if you won't hear
My Tale is ended, meant not to revive
But bury that which does no Good alive;

For Heat and Passion—Well, Sir, I have done—
—This Bellman, Jack, they call'd him to go on,
Had Orders once to cry a Carrier's Horse,
Stray'd or convey'd out of his proper Course,
So to his Work Jack went, and rung his Bell,
I want a Horse—and so began to tell
The Horse's Colour, Height, and Age, and Strain;
But quite forgot his wearing a Pack-Saddle;
This special Token did not thro' Confusion
Of Memory, occur till the Conclusion.
'Till Prayer was ended, as you're pleas'd to call it,
When recollecting thus we heard him bawl it,
(*Cart before Horse* a little, and the Folks
About the Market laugh'd, and crack'd their Jokes
God bless his Majesty King G——), says Jack,
Then roar'd—*WITH A PACKSADDLE ON HIS BACK*